

## What is Claimed:

1                   1.     A device for aiding in the closure of a wound for use with at  
2     least one suture, said device comprising:

3                   an external member; and

4                   an internal member rotatably coupled to said external member, said  
5     internal member having at least one receiver for receiving said at least one suture

6                   wherein said device is for placement within said wound.

1                   2.     The device according to claim 1, wherein said at least one  
2     suture is passed through said at least one receiver in said internal member, said at  
3     least one suture being coupled to portions of said wound and tightened by rotating  
4     said internal member in a first direction to draw said portions of said wound toward  
5     one another.

1                   3.     The device according to claim 1, wherein said at least one  
2     receiver is at least one of i) an aperture extending radially through said shaft, ii) a  
3     hook disposed within said shaft, iii) a substantially "T" shaped element coupled to an  
4     external portion of said shaft, and iv) a substantially hook shaped element coupled to  
5     an external portion of said shaft.

1                   4.     A device for use with sutures to repair a wound of a patient,  
2     said device comprising:

3                   a body having a at least one aperture extending radially through said  
4     body; and

5                   a shaft at least partially disposed within and rotatably coupled to said  
6     body, said shaft having a plurality of apertures and/or slots substantially in line with  
7     said at least one aperture in said body, said plurality of apertures spaced apart from  
8     one another and extending radially through said shaft.

1                   5.     The device according to claim 4, wherein said device is for  
2     placement within said wound.

1                   6.     The device according to claim 5, wherein said sutures are  
2     passed through said at least one aperture in said body and said plurality of apertures  
3     in said shaft, said sutures being coupled to portions of said wound and tightened by  
4     rotating said shaft in a first direction to draw said portions of said wound toward one  
5     another.

1                   7.     The device according to claim 6, further comprising means for  
2     preventing said shaft from rotating in a direction opposite to said first direction.

1                   8.     The device according to claim 7, wherein said means is a coil  
2     spring disposed between an outer surface of said shaft and an inner surface of said  
3     body.

1                   9.     The device according to claim 8, wherein a diameter of said coil  
2     spring increases as said shaft is rotated in said first direction.

1                   10.    The device according to claim 9, further comprising means for  
2     releasing tension of said coil spring to permit said shaft to rotate in said second  
3     direction.

1                   11.    The device according to claim 10, wherein said means for  
2     releasing tension comprises an end portion of said coil spring, said end portion being  
3     moved in a direction to increase said diameter of said coil spring to permit said shaft  
4     to be rotated in a direction opposite to said first direction.

1                   12.    The device according to claim 11, wherein said end portion at  
2     least one of extends through a portion of said body and extends beyond an end of  
3     said body.

1                   13.    The device according to claim 4, wherein said body further  
2     comprises a coupling for providing a vacuum to an interior of said wound to extract  
3     exudates from said wound.

1                   14.    The device according to claim 13, wherein said shaft has an  
2     orifice extending at least partially along a longitudinal axis of said shaft, said orifice

3 coupled to said coupling and at least one of said plurality of holes and/or slots of said  
4 shaft for providing said vacuum to said interior of said wound.

1 15. The device according to claim 14, wherein said body has at  
2 least one orifice extending from an outer portion of said body in fluid tight relation  
3 with said coupling for providing said vacuum to said interior of said wound.

1 16. The device according to claim 4, further comprising a means for  
2 applying a rotational force to an end of said shaft to rotate said shaft with respect to  
3 said body.

1 17. The device according to claim 4, wherein said patient is a  
2 human.

1 18. The device according to claim 4, wherein said patient is an  
2 animal.

1 19. A method for facilitating the healing of a wound, said method  
2 comprising the steps of:

3 placing at least one suture between points on a margin of said wound;

4 applying tension to said at least one suture from within said wound;

5 and

6 maintaining said tension on said at least one suture for a  
7 predetermined period of time.

1 20. The method according to claim 19, further comprising the steps  
2 of:

3 disposing a first body within a second body;

4 coupling said at least one suture to at least one of said first body and  
5 said second body;

6 rotating said second body with respect to said first body to apply said  
7 tension to said at least one suture.

1                   21.    The method according to claim 19, further comprising the step  
2 of applying a vacuum to said wound.

1                   22.    A method for facilitating the healing of a wound, the method  
2 comprising the steps of:

3                   providing a body having at least one aperture extending radially  
4 through said body;

5                   rotatably coupling a shaft to said body, said shaft having at least one  
6 aperture and/or slot capable of being aligned with said at least one aperture in said  
7 body;

8                   placing said body and said shaft within a cavity of said wound;

9                   attaching a first end of at least one suture to a first side of said wound;

10                  passing a second end of said at least one suture through said body and  
11 said shaft;

12                  attaching said second end of said at least one suture to second side of  
13 said wound; and

14                  rotating said shaft with respect to said tubular body to pull said first  
15 side of said wound and said second side of said wound toward one another.

1                   23.    The method according to claim 22, further comprising the steps  
2 of:

3                   coupling a vacuum source to said body; and

4                   forming a vacuum within said wound from said vacuum source to  
5 extract exudates from said wound.

1                   24.    The method according to claim 22, further comprising the step  
2 of further rotating said shaft to apply a predetermined tension between sides of said  
3 wound.

1                   25.    The method according to claim 24, further comprising the step  
2 of detachably coupling a driver to said shaft to apply said predetermined tension.

1                   26.    A method for facilitating the healing of a wound, the method  
2 comprising the steps of:

3                   providing a substantially tubular body having a plurality of apertures  
4 extending radially through said tubular body;

5                   rotatably coupling a shaft to said tubular body, said shaft having a  
6 respective plurality of apertures and/or slots capable of being aligned with said holes  
7 in said tubular body;

8                   placing said tubular body and said shaft within a cavity of said wound;

9                   attaching a first end of at least one suture to a first side of said wound;

10                  passing a second end of said at least one suture through said tubular  
11 body and said shaft;

12                  attaching said second end of said at least one suture to second side of  
13 said wound; and

14                  rotating said shaft with respect to said tubular body to pull said first  
15 side of said wound and said second side of said wound toward one another.

1                   27.    A device for use with sutures to repair a wound of a patient,  
2 said device comprising:

3                   a tubular body having a first plurality of apertures extending radially  
4 through said tubular body, said plurality of apertures spaced apart from one another  
5 along a length of said tubular body; and

6                   a shaft disposed within and rotatably coupled to said tubular body,  
7 said shaft having a respective plurality of apertures and/or slots substantially in line  
8 with said apertures in said tubular body, said respective plurality of apertures spaced  
9 apart from one another and extending radially through said shaft.

1                   28.    A device for use with sutures to repair a wound of a patient,  
2   said device comprising:

3                   a substantially U shaped body having a first passage and a second  
4   passage in line with one another; and

5                   a shaft rotatably coupled to said body at said first and second passage,  
6   said shaft having a plurality of receivers spaced apart from one another and one of  
7   extending radially through or coupled to said shaft.

1                   29.    A method for facilitating the healing of a wound using at least  
2   one suture, the method comprising the steps of:

3                   placing said at least one suture between points on a margin of said  
4   wound;

5                   applying tension to said at least one suture;

6                   maintaining said tension on said at least one suture for a  
7   predetermined period of time; and

8                   applying a vacuum to said wound.

1                   30.    The method according to claim 29, further comprising the step of  
2   periodically re-tensioning said at least one suture.

1                   31.    A method for facilitating the healing of a wound, the method  
2   comprising the steps of:

3                   securing an apparatus for applying a force to margins of said wound to  
4   at least a portion of said wound;

5                   applying the force to the margins of the wound with said apparatus;  
6   and

7                   applying vacuum to said wound.

1                    32.    The method according to claim 31, wherein said tension is  
2    applied from within said wound.

3                    33.    The method according to claim 31, wherein said wound is an  
4    open wound.